(a) whether Indian Council of Agriculture Research was respondent in any Public Interest Litigation filed in the High Court of Delhi;, during the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the case number;

(c) whether the Council paid expenses of any Public Interest Litigation, filed in High Court of Delhi, though it was not a respondent/petitioner or became party at any stage of the case during the last two years; and

(d) the details of the action taken/proposed to take against the officials who violated rules in above payment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) No expenses were paid by ICAR for any Public Interest Litigation, however, legal fees of Rs. 3850/- was paid to Shri B.S. More, Advocate in Criminal writ Petition No. 125/2001 which was filed as Public Interest Litigation in Delhi High Court against the Union of India through its Secretary, Ministrey of Home Affairs, North Block, New Delhi and Central Bureau of Investiation through its Director, CGO Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi.

(d) Since above payment was made with the approval of Competent Authority there was no violation of any rule hence, no action was taken/ proposed to be taken against any official.

Accurate crop forecasting

2501. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the news-item apearing in the Indian Express dated the 8th July, 2002, to the effect that Rs.76 crore plan for accurate crop forecast awaits nod; if so,what are the details thereof;

(b) by when this project would get approval;

(c) what are the various uses of this project;

(d) whether it is a fact that this would help remove human error and facilitate multiple in-season crop assessment in real time; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The Government is considering to implement during the Tenth Five Year Plan a project called "Forecasting Agricultural Output using Space, Agro-meteorology and Land-based Observations" (FASAL) with the proposed plan outlay of Rs.96.50 crores for the five years. The project is jointly conceived by the Department of Space and the Department of Agriculture & Cooperation and is at the stage of seeking the approval of Expenditure Finance Committee.

(c) to (e) FASAL is umbrella project aiming to use diverse remote sensing applications for agriculture with primary focus on crop forecasting. To begin with, these assesments are planned at National and State levels. Other uses of remote sensing in agriculture cover land use & wasteland mapping, drought assessment, soil resource surveys, cropping system analysis, Horticulture crops coverage, etc.

The FASAL approach integrates inputs from three types of observations viz, remote sensing, weather and field observations, providing complementary and supplementary information, to make forecasts and inferences of desired coverage, accuracy, and timeliness. The features of FASAL techniques include multiple in season crop assessment. The technology-based approach has lesser scope of human bias.

Climate Change and Agricultural Production

2502. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the global warming has an impact on Indian agriculture which would result in up to 30 per cent drop in crop production by 2050;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering to adopt strategies and resource conserving technologies, for sustainable farm development and improved productivity through low cost mechanism;

(c) whether this would have an impact on rice and wheat yields;

(d) if so, whether this was discussed in the South Asia Expert Workshop on Adaptation to Climate Change for Agricultural Productivity held in May, 2002; and